

## Council on Postsecondary Education 2006-08 Regional Stewardship Program Guidelines

### Introduction

In Kentucky, and across the nation, discussions of the mission of postsecondary institutions have focused on their responsibility for meeting the education, health, economic, and civic needs of the public they serve. A fully engaged postsecondary institution is a powerful force that serves as a center for regional and state improvement, including greater economic vitality, better government services, improved public health, and citizens who are more engaged with democratic processes. In addition, students and faculty at engaged institutions are part of a vital educational process that improves teaching and learning and links teaching, learning, and research to public needs.

Effective public engagement with P-12 schools, P-16 councils, employers, entrepreneurs, and government and nonprofit agencies requires alignment of institutional missions, resources, and reward systems with a commitment to stewardship. Public engagement programs, like basic research, are cost centers for postsecondary institutions. Some programs may generate limited funds through contracts with employers and local governments, but most programs that target the needs of public schools, small businesses, and government and nonprofit agencies require the support of public funds.

Recognizing the costs of basic research, the federal government has allocated billions of dollars through agencies like the National Science Foundation to successfully stimulate reallocation of university resources to address a national research agenda. The Regional Stewardship Program adopts this successful model to encourage public postsecondary institutions to expand their efforts to engage regional needs.

The Regional Stewardship Program supports comprehensive university efforts to focus their missions on improving quality of life in their regions, including the counties making up their area of geographic responsibility, and on achieving the aspirations set forth in *The Kentucky Postsecondary Education Improvement Act of 1997* (House Bill 1) and the Public Agenda for postsecondary and adult education in Kentucky for 2005-2010.

### Program Goals

The overarching goal of the Regional Stewardship Program is to promote regional or statewide economic development, livable communities, social inclusion, improved P-12 schools, creative governance, and civic participation through public engagement activities initiated by comprehensive university faculty and staff. To help accomplish this goal, campus administrators are expected to design and implement programs that align institutional resources and infrastructure to support their missions as stewards of place, and to create partnerships and undertake engagement activities that address regional and state needs. One of the first priorities during the infrastructure development process will be for campus officials to assemble a regional advisory committee comprised of local government and community

leaders, business and industry representatives, education leaders, policy professionals, interest groups, and citizens from across the university's area of geographic responsibility to assist in identifying regional needs, opportunities, and stewardship priorities. The regional advisory committee will help develop and approve strategic plans and proposals for stewardship funding aimed at building intellectual capacity and meeting regional needs. Other specific activities include:

- Develop a plan for aligning institutional priorities, resources, and infrastructure to support stewardship initiatives.
- Modify organizational structures, institutional practices, and reward systems to support stewardship activities by faculty and staff.
- Identify key indicators of regional economic vitality, quality of life, and civic participation and configure information systems to collect and track these data.
- Engage in environmental scanning activities, convene advisory committee meetings, and host public forums to identify regional or state needs, opportunities, and stewardship priorities.
- Produce a planning document that highlights regional needs, opportunities, and priorities and recommends strategies for addressing needs or taking advantage of opportunities.
- Increase awareness among advisory committee members, the campus community, and regional stakeholders of university resources and how those resources can be directed to address identified needs or take advantage of identified opportunities.
- Establish partnerships with local and regional governments, P-12 schools, community and civic organizations, businesses, hospitals, foundations, and philanthropic organizations to garner financial or in-kind support for stewardship activities and increase program impact.
- Encourage faculty members to generate proposals and engage in stewardship activities that promote regional or statewide economic development, livable communities, social inclusion, creative governance, and civic participation.
- Identify key indicators related to the nature and extent of institutional/community interactions and configure information systems to collect and track these data.
- Provide professional development for faculty in engagement related areas and find creative ways of integrating public engagement into teaching and research activities at the institutions.

Specific goals for individual engagement initiatives will be described in program proposals submitted for Council approval and funding. The Council staff will work with campus officials, as needed, to refine goals and identify key indicators for measuring progress toward goal attainment.

### **Program Funding**

As part of its biennial budget recommendation to the Governor, the Council on Postsecondary Education recommended \$3.0 million of recurring funds for the Regional Stewardship Program in the first year of the 2006-08 biennium and an additional \$15.0

million of recurring funds for the program in the second year (i.e., a total of \$18.0 million in year two). During the 2006 legislative session, the General Assembly appropriated \$1.2 million of recurring funds to the program in 2006-07 and an additional \$2.4 million of recurring funds in 2007-08 (for a total of \$3.6 million in year two). These funds will be divided into three pools pending allocation and distribution: (a) infrastructure, (b) regional grants, and (c) stewardship initiatives.

Infrastructure funds will support the development and maintenance of organizational structures, personnel, information systems, and community relationships directed toward the identification of regional needs, opportunities, and stewardship priorities. The size of the infrastructure pool will be \$1.2 million each year of the biennium. Infrastructure funds will be allocated among the Commonwealth's six comprehensive universities in equal amounts of \$200,000 per institution each year. Allocated funds will be distributed upon submission and Council approval of a plan to align institutional priorities, resources, and infrastructure to support and sustain stewardship initiatives at the institution. To qualify for infrastructure funds, each institution should submit a one-time, infrastructure plan to the Council by close of business October 1, 2006. Within 30 days of receipt of the proposals, Council staff will advise the institutions of any noncompliance or nonconformity and shall work with the institutions to help them qualify for the grant. It is anticipated that, in subsequent biennia, infrastructure funds will become recurring to the institutions, rather than to the Regional Stewardship Funding Program. Any infrastructure funds not distributed by the end of the biennium (i.e., close of business Monday, June 30, 2008) will be transferred to the stewardship initiatives pool for distribution on a competitive basis. Any institution that does not qualify to receive its 2006-07 infrastructure pool allocation will be afforded an opportunity to submit an infrastructure plan by June 1 each year thereafter to access funds allocated in subsequent years.

Regional grant funds will support comprehensive university efforts to build intellectual capacity in stewardship priority areas. The size of the regional grant pool will be \$1.8 million in the second year of the biennium. Pool funds will be allocated among the comprehensive universities in equal amounts of \$300,000 per institution. Allocated funds will be distributed upon submission and Council approval of two documents: (1) a strategic plan, produced in collaboration with, and approved by, an institution's advisory committee, which identifies regional needs, opportunities, and stewardship priorities; and (2) a proposal that identifies targeted areas of impact at the university and contains a proposed budget for faculty and staff salaries, and operating expenses, in those areas. To qualify for regional grant funds, each institution should submit a strategic plan for stewardship activities and a priority area proposal to the Council by close of business June 1, 2007. Within 30 days of receipt of the plans and proposals, the Council staff will advise the institutions of any noncompliance or nonconformity and shall work with the institutions to help them qualify for the grant. It is anticipated that, once distributed, these funds will become recurring to the institutions, rather than to the Regional Stewardship Funding Program. Any regional grant funds not distributed by the end of the biennium (i.e., close of business Monday, June 30, 2008) will be transferred to the stewardship initiatives pool for distribution on a competitive basis. Any institution that does not qualify to receive its 2007-08 regional grant pool allocation will be

afforded an opportunity to submit a strategic plan and priority area proposal by June 1 each year thereafter to access regional grant funds allocated in subsequent years.

The stewardship initiatives pool will support specific public engagement activities at the institutions that improve economic prosperity, quality of life, or civic participation in the region or state, while furthering the goals and mandates of House Bill 1 and the Public Agenda. The size of the stewardship initiatives pool will be \$600,000 in the second year of the biennium. These funds will be distributed to the comprehensive universities on a competitive basis based on responses to an annual request for proposals issued by Council staff. To receive consideration for funding, proposed initiatives should address critical regional needs, as identified in a strategic plan for regional stewardship developed in partnership with, and endorsed by, a region's stewardship advisory committee. The Council staff will seek to have a provision added to the 2008-2010 appropriations bill, so that any stewardship initiative funds not distributed by the end of the biennium will be carried forward in the funding program until guideline requirements have been satisfied. The first round of proposals for stewardship initiative funds should be submitted to the Council by close of business October 1, 2007. The second round of proposals is due by close of business June 1, 2008. It is anticipated that, in subsequent biennia, stewardship initiative funds will become recurring to the Regional Stewardship Funding Program maintained at the Council.

### Uses of Program Funds

**Infrastructure** - Infrastructure funds will be used to develop and maintain organizational structures, personnel, information systems, advisory committees, and external partnerships necessary to sustain stewardship activities. Appropriate uses for these funds include expenditures for a stewardship coordinator, stewardship staff, and related operating expenses. Infrastructure funds should not be used to support capital outlay or debt service expenditures.

- **Stewardship Coordinator:** Salaries, benefits, and other personnel related expenses associated with a full-time or part-time faculty or administrative staff position responsible for coordinating stewardship program activities at the institution.
- **Stewardship Staff:** Salaries, benefits, and other personnel related expenses associated with full-time or part-time administrative, managerial, or secretarial staff positions that support the program coordinator and stewardship program activities at the institution.
- **Related Operating Expenses:** Expenditures directly attributable to the support and operation of stewardship program activities, including but not limited to the following: (a) travel and related expenses associated with establishing and maintaining external partnerships; (b) costs associated with convening advisory committee meetings or hosting public forums; (c) public awareness campaigns; (d) professional development for faculty in engagement related areas; (e) costs associated with integrating public engagement into the curriculum; (f) costs associated with restructuring faculty role and reward structures; and (g) computer equipment and software, as needed to support stewardship coordinator and staff activities, including development of environmental scanning and institutional/community interaction databases.

**Regional Grants** - Regional grant funds will be used to recruit and retain full-time faculty or professional staff in areas of strategic benefit to a service region, or the state, as identified in an institution's strategic plan for regional stewardship and its priority area proposal, and as endorsed by a region's stewardship advisory committee. Appropriate uses for these funds include start-up costs, salaries, benefits, travel, and other professional expenses as permitted by university policy for new faculty or professional staff positions in targeted priority areas. It is anticipated that the addition of newly hired faculty or staff within a given Council approved priority area will result in reduced departmental teaching loads and increased release time, so that participating faculty will have more time to engage in regional stewardship activities.

**Stewardship Initiatives** - Stewardship initiative funds will be directed toward the creation of partnerships and the execution of engagement activities that promote regional or statewide economic development, livable communities, social inclusion, and creative governance, while helping to achieve the goals of House Bill 1 and the Public Agenda. Initiatives funded through the program will address critical regional needs, as identified in the strategic plan for regional stewardship and endorsed by a region's stewardship advisory committee. Examples of initiatives that may be funded include, but are not limited to:

- Addressing issues of teacher quality, pre-service training, in-service professional development, or teacher shortages.
- Conducting research that identifies causes and solutions for student achievement gaps.
- Developing community-based research programs that address public problems, such as improving the environment, public health, and transportation.
- Meeting the needs of current employers and creating new economic opportunities for the region or state.
- Increasing citizen participation in democratic processes.
- Helping the region address challenges and opportunities posed by an increasingly diverse population.

### **Uses of Funds Requirements**

The universities that participate in the Regional Stewardship Program shall utilize program funds so that the following requirements are met:

- Infrastructure funds will not be distributed until an institution's plan for aligning its priorities, resources, organizational structure, and reward systems in support of stewardship activities has been submitted and approved by the Council.
- If a university can demonstrate through its infrastructure plan that a sufficient level of institutional personnel and resources are already committed to supporting core stewardship of place functions, then the infrastructure funds provided through this program can be used to build intellectual capacity in targeted impact areas, subject to guideline provisions specifying applicable uses of regional grant funds.

- Regional grant funds will not be distributed until an institution's plan for developing its infrastructure has been submitted and approved by the Council, and its infrastructure funds have been distributed.
- Regional grant funds will not be distributed until an institution's strategic plan for regional stewardship and its priority area proposal have been submitted and approved by the Council.
- Proposals for stewardship initiative funds will not be considered for funding until an institution's strategic plan for stewardship activities and priority area proposal have been submitted and approved, and its regional grant funds have been distributed.

### **Proposal Requirements and Evaluation Criteria**

The comprehensive universities will submit proposals for stewardship initiative funds that adhere to the following requirements:

- The minimum amount of stewardship initiative funds that shall be requested in a single proposal is \$20,000.
- Institutions can submit multi-year proposals for stewardship initiative funds, but will be required to present follow-up proposals for continuation funding every two years for the duration of the project. Continuation funding is not guaranteed. Follow-up proposals will be added to the pool of proposed projects received each year and evaluated on relative merit.
- Each proposal shall contain specific goals for the proposed stewardship activity, identify key indicators that will help monitor progress toward goal attainment, provide clear definitions of expected program outcomes, and contain an evaluation plan.
- Expected outcomes should be clearly linked to documented regional or state needs, such as raising educational attainment levels, improving public health or environmental conditions, promoting economic development, supporting small business development, or increasing civic engagement.
- Each proposal shall contain a plan for linking the proposed engagement activity to the core academic function of the institution, as well as a plan for the ultimate completion of the project or disengagement of the activity.
- Proposals will be evaluated by an assessment team comprised of CPE staff, state agency representatives, and outside consultants with expertise in the stewardship of place arena.

Institutional proposals for stewardship initiative funds will be evaluated based on the criteria listed below. Requests need not meet all the criteria to receive consideration. In the event that eligible funding requests exceed the amount appropriated, the overriding factor in determining the distribution of stewardship initiative funds will be a proposal's contribution toward effectively meeting regional needs and furthering the goals of Kentucky's Public Agenda for Postsecondary and Adult Education.

- The extent to which the proposed activity addresses significant regional or state needs, or capitalizes on unique opportunities, as identified through assessments involving the institution, its advisory committee, and other appropriate external partners.
- The potential for enhancing collaboration, where feasible. This includes, but is not limited to, partnering with public and independent postsecondary institutions, P-12 organizations, local P-16 councils, local and regional governments, nonprofit agencies, community and civic organizations, businesses, hospitals, foundations, and philanthropic organizations to share costs and increase program impact.
- The extent to which the stewardship activity holds promise for significant and sustainable regional or statewide improvement in the areas of economic development, livable communities, social inclusion, creative governance, and civic participation.
- The potential for furthering the goals of House Bill 1 and the Public Agenda for Postsecondary and Adult Education in Kentucky.
- The availability of financial or in-kind support contributed by local, regional, or state partners, or by the postsecondary institution(s) involved in the project.
- The extent to which the proposed utilization of institutional resources and faculty expertise provide a reasonable expectation that project goals will be achieved.
- The potential for producing publishable results that can be generalized to other regions of Kentucky, or across the nation, to address similar problems or take advantage of similar opportunities.

### **Annual Reporting**

The Council staff, working with the comprehensive universities and the regional advisory committees, will devise and maintain reporting procedures that specify the content and format of Regional Stewardship Program annual reports. The reports will include accountability for outcomes that support campus action plans contained within the 2005-2010 Public Agenda.